

## Message Text

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65

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-11 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 SP-02

CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 PA-01 PRS-01 DODE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /062 W

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O R 131250Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4955

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

USEC BRUSSELS

US MISSION GENEVA 844

US MISSION NATO 810

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SP

SUBJECT: ASTURIAS MINERS STRIKE ENDS WITH SIGNIFICANT SECRET  
BALLOT

1. DURING RECENT STRIKE WAVE ONE OF MOST PERSISTENT STRIKES HAS  
BEEN THAT OF 13,000 ASTRURIAS MINERS AT GOVT OWNED HUMOSA  
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COMPANY, WHICH HAS LASTED TWO MONTHS NOW. THE STRIKE, OVER

WAGES, SLOWLY SPREAD, AND BECAME MORE EMBITTERED. STRIKERS WERE ASSISTED SOME WHAT BY FINANCIAL AID FROM INTERNATIONAL SOURCES, INCLUDING MINERS INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIAT IN LONDON, FRENCH CGT, AND ALSO REPORTEDLY EAST EUROPEAN UNIONS (IRONICALLY AT THE SAME TIME, POLISH GOVT IS ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN SELLING POLISH COAL TO ALLEVIATE SPANISH COAL SUPPLY PROBLEMS POSED BY STRIKE). VIRTUALLY ALL CLANDESTINE LABOR GROUPS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED, INCLUDING SOCIALIST UGT, CATHOLIC USO, DOMINANT PCE ELEMENT IN SPANISH WORKERS COMMISSIONS (SWC), AND MORE EXTREMIST GROUPS SUCH AS "CATHOLIC" ORT, "MAOIST" MCE, AND TROSKYITE LCR.

2. THEN THE ASTURIAS GOVERNOR CONVOKED A REFERENDUM, APARENTLY THE FIRST OF THIS TYPE SINCE CIVIL WAR, AMONG STRIKING MINERS WHICH WAS CONDUCTED BY SECRET BALLOT ON MARCH 12, SOME 8.000 MINERS (65 PER CENT OF STRIKING WORKERS) VOTED OF WHICH AN OVER WHELMING 96 PER CENT VOTED TO RETURN TO WORK. HUNOSA HAS NOW ANNOUNCED IT WILL REOPEN ITS MINES ON MARCH 15, TALKS ARE TO CONTUINE ON THE WAGE ISSUE.

3. ELSEWHERE THERE IS STILL A SUBSTANIAL AMOUNT OF STRIKE ACTIVITY. THE STRIKE AND LABOR PROBLEMS IN VITORIA, IN AFTERMATH OF MARCH 3 GENERAL STRIKE, REMAIN UNRESOVLED, AND THERE REMAINS SUBSTANTIAL LABOR RELATED STRIKE ACTIVITY IN REST OF BASQUE PROVINCES, IN GALICIA, IN ZARAGOZA, AND IN BARCELONA.

4. COMMENT THE ASTURIAS STRIKE VOTE, WHICH LARGELY CIRCUMVENTS EXISTING LEGISLATION AND THE GOVT CONTROLLED SSO STRUCTURES COULD SERVE AS A USEFUL MODEL FOR OTHER DISPUTES. IT STRIKES AT THE MANIPULATED WORKER ASSEMBLIES WHERE VOTES ON WHETHER OR NOT TO RETURN TO WORK ARE TAKEN BY ACCLAMATION OR A SHOW OF HANDS, UNDER THE PRESSURE OF RINGLEADERS, WHO USUALLY BELONG TO PCE OR OTHER MORE EXTREMIST GROUPS. CREDIT FOR ENDING ASTURIAS STRIKE WITH SECRET BALLOT WOULD APPEAR TO LARGELY GO TO BOTH LOCAL GOVERNOR AND LIBERAL NOEL ZAPICO, PRESIDENT OF SSO'S MINERS SYNDICATE AND NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF SSO'S NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WORKERS. OTHER FACTORS WHICH HELPED BRING ABOUT THIS HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT VOTE WERE GENERAL WEARINESS AND INCREASING ECONOMIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HARDSHIP AMONG THE MINERS AND MODERATE ATTITUDE OF PCE LEADERSHIP IN THE WORKERS COMMISSIONS, WHO IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS HAVE BEEN URGING WORKERS TO RETURN TO THEIR JOBS ( BOTH IN ASTURIAS AND IN STRIKES IN OTHER PARTS OF SPAIN.) STABLER

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DISPUTE SETTLEMENT, LABOR STRIKES, MINING INDUSTRY  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 13 MAR 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** morefirh  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**TAGS:** ELAB, PINT, EMIN, SP  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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